

Testimony of Sarah Ann Adams PA-C
General Law Committee
House Bill 5147
February 22, 2022

Senator Maroney, Representative D'Agostino, Senator Witkos, Representative Rutigliano and members of the General Law Committee:

Good morning. My Name is Sarah Ann Adams. I am a practicing Physician Assistant in Neurosurgery and here today to speak in support of House Bill 5147, *An Act Concerning Physician Assistants and the Palliative Use of Marijuana*.

I have worked for 15 years in Waterbury providing comprehensive neurosurgical care to patients both at my office and at the two community hospitals. My clinical interactions with my patients allow me to evaluate, diagnose, outline and initiate treatment plans. In collaboration with my surgeons, I additionally provide high quality perioperative education and management, which includes assisting with their surgical procedures, in-patient hospital care and prescribing and monitoring the safety of scheduled medications. Even with an optimal surgical outcome, my patients can be left with difficult to treat chronic neuropathic pain.

Many of my patients, in an effort to avoid reliance on opioid therapies have inquired about access to medical cannabis. Due to my inability to certify eligible conditions, despite my close and often chronic relationships with my spine patients, I have had to refer them out for consultation with another physician. This has created much frustration for my patients who now have to establish a new relationship with someone who is not familiar with them or their medical background. The timing from referral through certification is often long and arduous. They at times feel judged and scrutinized for trying to access a therapy that is often very beneficial in the reduction of their chronic pain syndromes. They are then required to see this physician annually to maintain their certification, a physician who has had no interim participation in the care for their certified condition.

I have worked for many years building close, professional, and trusted relationships with my patients to provide them comprehensive spine care. They look to me for access to the modalities that will improve their quality of life, and increase their abilities to perform their activities of daily living and functionality within their family units. Voting in favor of HB 5147 will expand access for my patients while maintaining our long-standing, verified patient-PA relationship.

Thank you very much for your time and attention.

Sarah Ann Adams, MHS, PA-C
Vice President, Connecticut Academy of PAs